

**Alliance for the Study of the Holocaust**  
**Annual Report for 2004-2005**  
December, 2005

Dear Friends of the Alliance:

As Theodor Adorno said, "The almost insoluble task is to let neither the power of others, nor our own powerlessness, stupefy us" (*Minima Moralis: Reflections from a Damaged Life*). This year the theme "never again" became a call to action as the situation in the Darfur region of the Sudan worsened. As in any in the 2005 series. Indeed, the members of the Alliance felt so strongly, that our treasurer David Salm, drafted an editorial which appeared in our local newspaper, *The Press Democrat* in March of last year urging others to "intervene and stop the genocide in Darfur" and show that "our generation refused to remain silent in the face of another genocide." We urged members of our local community to join us for Jerry's lecture, and many came. Fowler challenged all of us to inform ourselves and take action. A number of students who were enrolled in the lecture series responded in a way that none of us could have anticipated.

Nicole Balthazar, Jennifer Bogan, Emily Boudreau, Joanna Duenas, Lauren Evans, Miriam Hope, Lauren Renz, Ginelle Nelson, Bethany Pearson, Melissa Speaks, and Charmayne Weddle reactivated the Human Rights Club on campus under Professor Myrna Goodman's leadership and engaged in a series of fost everyone connected with the lecture series last Spring would agree that Jerry Fowler, Director of the Committee on Conscience of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and his talk on the Genocide Emergency in Darfur had the greatest impact of fundraising and educational efforts both last Spring and this past Fall, raising over \$1,500 for educating children in refugee camps in Chad. They sold t-shirts and wristbands, held events on campus, and "tabled" both on campus and in the community. Last semester, in collaboration with JUMP (Join Us Making Progress), the community service program of the Associated Students, they were involved in a series of educational events. Posters about Darfur sprung up everywhere on campus, and are still visible. While the number of students involved is small, their impact has been enormous. Let us hope the outcry against the powerful in the Sudan will continue and the plight of the people of Darfur will be ameliorated. Let the courage and dedication of these students, who learned about the Holocaust and took responsibility for speaking out about intolerance, be a model for all of us.

Congratulations to Professor Myrna Goodman, who was selected to participate in the Silberman Seminar for University Faculty at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. This is a highly competitive summer program and her selection reflects positively on the quality of her scholarly work and SSU's Holocaust Studies Center. One of the fruits of her work at the museum can be seen in the number of new voices that have added to the 2006 series. This summer, I had the privilege of participating in *The Legacy of the Holocaust: Women and the Holocaust* Fifth International Conference in Krakow, Poland and delivered a paper on "The Legacy of Survival: The Writing of Women Who Escaped." Both Myrna and I look forward to incorporating some of what we learned into our lectures and discussion sections next semester.

The members of the Alliance have many dreams for the year ahead that we hope you will share with us. The report that follows provides more detail about the lecture series and the Alliance. On behalf of the Alliance, I want to express my gratitude to all of you who helped us in the past year and I hope that you will continue to generously support our efforts. We look forward to meeting many new and familiar faces in the coming year. If you can, do join us for one of the lectures next semester and plan to join the faculty and members of the Alliance afterwards for dinner with our guest speaker.

Sincerely,

**Barbara Lesch McCaffry, Ph.D.**

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## **ANNUAL REPORT OF ALLIANCE ACTIVITIES FOR 2004-2005**

### **THE 2005 LECTURE SERIES:**

The 22nd Annual Sonoma State University Holocaust Lecture Series focused on "Remembrance and Resistance" brought a number of new speakers to campus, along with many voices we yearned to hear again. The vibrancy of the program continues to be reflected in the interest and involvement of upper division students, community members, the dedication of the Dr. Myrna Goodman who directs the Holocaust Studies Center, the other instructional faculty (Ms. Ilka Hartmann and Dr. Barbara Lesch McCaffry), and the continuing support of Dean Elaine Leeder of the School of Social Sciences.

What profoundly marked this year's series was the number of Holocaust survivors who were able to share their experiences (Lucille Eichengreen, Lillian Judd, Betty Kale and SSU alumnus Bernard Offen). In addition, Paul Schwartzbart spoke of his recently published book, *Breaking the Silence: Reminiscences of a Hidden Child*. In addition, survivors of other genocides were able to share their experiences: Luong Ung (Cambodia) and Tharcisse Seminega (Rwanda). Another important first was a short talk and slide show by two former students --Julie Leishman and Rebecca Packard --who had participated in the series and had worked with Mathilde Mukantabana with survivors of the Rwandan genocide after graduating from SSU with degrees in Sociology. It is these lectures, along with Jerry Fowler's, that had the greatest impact.

The other lecture that the students rated highly was Robert Krikorian's exceptional talk on The Armenian Genocide and Historical Memory and we look forward to welcoming him back next semester. There were also two substantive new presentations dealing with resistance: Ruth Sach's talk on The White Rose: German Students' Resistance Movement and Mitch Braff's discussion of the Jewish Partisans Movement During the Holocaust. The final panel, coordinated by Dean Elaine Leeder, focused on second generation speakers including three generations who attended: a survivor, her daughter, and her granddaughter. Needless to say, it was a powerful series and the students shared its impact with us on the final day: What Have We Learned, as well as in moving essays that ended the final coursework.

### **THE 2006 LECTURE SERIES:**

The 23rd Annual Series will focus on Living with Genocide: Past, Present, Future. This year we will be adding a new text by Whitworth College Professor James Waller, *Becoming Evil*, and he will be giving the Robert L. Harris Memorial Lecture on March 21st. We are also thrilled that SSU History Professor Steve Bittner will be joining us for the first time to speak about The Holocaust in Historical Context. Fritz Tubach, the child of a Nazi officer, and Bernat Rosner, a survivor from Hungary, will again share tales of their Uncommon Friendship and we are anticipating Claremont McKenna College Professor John Roth's talk on The Ethics of Forgiveness after a long absence from the series. We are also very pleased to be able to include a lecture on Japanese War Crimes by Rutgers University Professor Peter Li, our first on the treatment of Chinese and Koreans during the same time period as the Holocaust (1931-1945). Another new speaker to the series is Professor Lynne Rappaport of Pomona College who will be speaking about The Holocaust and Popular Culture. In addition to our panel of Holocaust survivors, we will be ending the series with a group of speakers who will be Remembering the Kindertransports. Returning speakers include Jerry Fowler of the Committee on Conscience updating us on the on-going genocide in Darfur; Robert Krikorian, delivering the first annual Armenian Genocide Memorial Lecture; and SSU Professor of Native American Studies Ed Castillo speaking about the genocide of Native Americans in Northern California. We do hope you are as enthusiastic as we are about the 2006 series.

## THE ALLIANCE:

We welcome the following members who joined the board this year:

- Charlene “Char” Hickman, member of the Bay Area American Indian Two Spirits (BAAITS);
- Tina Kelly, a retired high school Social Studies teacher (Windsor); and
- former Holocaust Lecture Series students, three of whom are now SSU alums: Yesica Arredondo, Jennifer Bogan, Lauren Evans, Miriam Hope and Melissa Speaks. Jennifer Bogan and Lauren Evans are also the current co-chairs of SSU’s Human Rights Club.
- and send our heartfelt thanks to the following continuing board members:
- Larry Carlin, Committee Chair for Shomrei Torah’s annual Yom HaShoah (Holocaust) observance and a former member of the Sonoma County Human Rights Commission;
- Christyne Davidian, an active member and one of the founders of Armenians of the North Bay and a member of the board of Listening for a Change (formerly the Survivor Project);
- Flora Lee Ganzler, a retired high school Social Studies teacher (Rancho Cotati), former member of the Sonoma County Human Rights Commission, and the former Coordinator of the Sonoma County High School Diversity Forum;
- Myrna Goodman, Director of SSU’s Center for the Study of the Holocaust and Genocide and Chair of SSU’s Sociology Department;
- Perla Guevara-Otero, former Holocaust Lecture Series student and SSU alumna;
- Ilka Hartmann, Holocaust Lecture Series faculty member;
- Brian Jersky, Professor, SSU’s Mathematics Department and former Chair, Board of Directors, Hillel of Sonoma County;
- Elaine Leeder, Dean of the School of Social Sciences;
- Michael (Mac) McCaffry, a retired high school English teacher (Windsor);
- Joel Neuberg, Past President of the Alliance;
- David Salm, Treasurer;
- Evelyn (Evey) Sackler, former Recording Secretary; and
- Barbara Tobin, Program Director of the Sonoma County Jewish Films Series (a program of the Jewish Community Agency of Sonoma County) and Project Coordinator of Remember Us: the Holocaust B’nai Mitzvah Project.

--as well as senior advisors, Virgil Miller and Sylvia Sucher. It is with deep appreciation that we note that two long term members-- Walter Kuttner and Gene Kravis -- have ended their service on the board. We hope to continue to honor their legacy of commitment and service.

The dedicated board members had an enormously productive year, both in supporting the lecture series and working on several key projects, the first of which was approving a revised mission statement (which appears on the enclosed insert).

Due to the commitment, creativity and energy of board member Christyne Davidian, the Armenian Genocide Memorial Lecture Fund was successfully launched last Spring. We are indebted to the Armenian National Committee and the Thomas Family Foundation, as well as many individual donors, for their generosity. These funds will support an annual dedicated lecture and we look forward to Richard Krikorian’s return to the series this spring.

In the past year, several members of the board were also actively involved in publicizing the lectures, including a Sonoma Spotlight interview (Ilka Hartmann and Barbara Lesch McCaffry) and a series of public service radio announcements on KRCB radio. We are thrilled that Larry Carlin has agreed to assist the Alliance in coordinating publicity for the 2006 series.

Most importantly, the board is planning a special event to honor the Holocaust survivors, founders, educators, and supporters of Holocaust Education at SSU. Please mark your calendars now for the afternoon of Sunday, September 17th.

Needless to say, this has been a productive year and we could not have done it without your continuing commitment! For those who have been able to afford to support our efforts financially, we are in your debt. Your intentions, actions, and kindness have helped us in bringing exceptional speakers for the series and co-sponsoring the annual community Yom Hashoah Commemoration.

### **2006 SONOMA COUNTY YOM HASHOAH COMMEMORATIONS**

“The Legacy of the Nuremberg Trials” will be the featured presentation at the 2006 Community Yom Hashoah Commemoration on Sunday April 23rd starting at 2 p.m. at the Friedman Events Center at 4676 Mayette Avenue in Santa Rosa. In remembrance of the 60th anniversary of the Nuremberg Trials, Lawrence Rafal, Dean and Professor of Law at Touro Law School, Huntington, N.Y., will examine the effects of the trials on international law, and especially why they have not stemmed the global tide of genocides.

“Diversity and the Yom Hashoah” is the theme for Congregation Shomrei Torah’s annual Holocaust observance, scheduled for Monday April 24th starting at 7 p.m. at 1717 Yulupa Avenue in Santa Rosa. Participants will include representatives from Rwanda, Cambodia, Armenia, and Native Americans. Jewish Holocaust survivors in Sonoma County will be honored in the Candle Lighting ceremony. For more information, call 578-5519.